

Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire SY2 6ND

Date: 16th September 2022

Dear Planning Inspectors,

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Local Communities letter on Nutrient Neutrality and the Habitats Regulations: 21st July 2022.

On the 21st July 2022, Shropshire Council received correspondence from the Chief Planner at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) concerning nutrient neutrality and the Habitats Regulations (Appendix 1 of this document). This correspondence advised that Natural England (NE) will establish a Nutrient Mitigation Scheme to deliver mitigation measures for those catchments identified as being affected by nutrient pollution. The River Clun catchment in Shropshire is one such catchment, as set out in NE's advice to Shropshire Council of 16th March 2022 (OD002 and OD002a-OD002g).

The 21st of July DLUHC correspondence states that the NE Nutrient Mitigation Scheme will ensure mitigation is available for development to deliver nutrient neutrality. It also sets out that NE will deliver the Nutrient Mitigation Scheme and accredit mitigation delivered through it. This will enable Local Planning Authorities to grant planning permission for those developments in affected catchments which have secured the necessary credits. With reference to plan making, the letter confirms that the measures it sets out will *'contribute to the evidence base for plans, helping to show they are deliverable with the NE mitigation scheme being in place'*.

The Council considers that the establishment and delivery of a Nutrient Mitigation Scheme for the River Clun Special Area of Conservation (SAC) catchment by NE and NE's accreditation of the mitigation measures delivered by such a scheme, support the Council's approach to safeguarding the SAC in the Draft Shropshire Local Plan – an approach to which NE and the Environment Agency (EA) objected.

Given the Council would not wish to presume whether this new information from DLUHC alters the current objections to the draft Shropshire Local Plan from Natural England and the Environment Agency, you may wish to approach these organisations separately to seek further clarification on their respective positions.

Yours sincerely

Eddie West
Planning Policy and Strategy Manager
Shropshire Council

